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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the employment outlook for those students combining foreign language skills with expertise in another area. Information gathered from multinational organizations, the Association of Export Management Companies, the United States government, and 1975 newspaper classified advertisements all indicate a wealth of opportunities for those individuals who have career training in a particular field and a high degree of language proficiency as an adjunct skill. (AM)

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LANGUAGES FOR THE WORLD OF WORK
An Idea Whose Time Has Arrived

Toby Tamarkin
Ernest J. Wilkins

Among language teachers there is considerable confusion about the meaning of "Languages for the World of Work". During a visit to a university in the Midwest, a foreign language professor gave his reaction to the concept as follows: "Certainly this type of program cannot apply to our students. They don't see themselves as future laborers, but as professionals far removed from menial-task situations. If they wanted career education they would have enrolled in a vocational school."

Recently a high-school French teacher in a prosperous Connecticut town exclaimed at a workshop on career education and languages, "This approach is not practical for us in French. Students in our classes are not interested in the commercial value of the French language. They enjoy listening to the sound of the words and reading selections from great literature. I want them to study the beautiful Parisian language as an art." French enrollments in that area have since declined and the class was eventually dropped. In the light of our present situation, it is time to reassess student needs and redefine our goals.

In order to take advantage of today's opportunities a student must not only learn the languages and cross-cultural skills, but must have a high level of technical training in a career that is in demand. Traditionally language majors have prepared themselves to be teachers of language and literature or perhaps to be translators and interpretors. They assumed they could find a livelihood using their knowledge of language and literature as a primary tool. Using language ability as a primary tool for employment implies that formal training or experience in language is the first prerequisite and that the job can be done by a person who has no other career training.

We, as language teachers, have ignored the need for language as a secondary skill or as an adjunct to another skill. This concept is comparatively new in the language teaching profession but now figures prominently as a theme for conferences and workshops. Fortunately, many schools and colleges are beginning to offer different kinds of interdisciplinary programs which combine career and language training.

Using language ability as an adjunct skill in the World of Work implies that one has formal training in another career or discipline. For example, a person might have engineering training as a primary tool and German as an adjunct skill. Languages for the World of Work usually refer to non-academic positions in government, industry, and business.

The World of Work is often misconstrued as referring only to "menial tasks". Actually, the term may be applied to any job or profession. Similarly, the term "career education" has been misinterpreted to refer to vocational skills generally associated with high school level training, or specialized manual and mechanical skills training. As Kenneth B. Hoyt, Associate Commissioner of Career Education, points out:

1. Career education includes awareness, exploration, decision making, preparation, entry and advancement. Vocational education has only one of these components—career preparation as its main thrust.

2. Career education is for all persons. Whereas, vocational education, as it now exists, concentrates primarily on people seeking vocational-technical education below the baccalaureate level.

3. Career education emphasizes both paid and unpaid work in the lives of individuals. Whereas, vocational education emphasizes preparation for work in the world of paid employment.

In the broadest sense, career education applies to any training for one's life work whatever that may be. This definition of career education gives deeper insight into the exact nature of languages for the World of Work. Work in this sense applies to all levels of careers in which language competency plays a part in carrying out one's daily assignments. It is understood that a second language competency in this case is an integral part of the totality of one's professional expertise.

A main point for consideration at this time and no doubt for some time to come is that opportunities for language majors using language training as a primary tool, such as in teaching, are extremely limited. On the other hand, there are many exciting and rewarding careers which require language ability as an adjunct skill in the non-academic world of work.

Multinational corporations are discovering the advantages which

come to their companies when an international manager, controller, engineer or marketing specialist has language and cross-cultural skills which enable him to deal more effectively with the host nationals abroad.

In a recent national study more than 6,000 business firms were surveyed regarding their language requirements. Those responding to the survey (23 percent) reported more than 60,000 jobs for which language was required or considered useful. This included jobs both at home and abroad.*

Many positions abroad have language ability as a high priority and even though primary skill training and experience come first, the ability to communicate with the host nationals and to adjust to living and working conditions overseas are now receiving more and more emphasis by the multinationals.

In the national survey referred to above, the multinational corporations were asked to indicate the methods they are now using to satisfy their needs for language skills. Fifty percent of the companies responding indicated that they hired people with formal training (those trained in high schools and colleges). There was an indication on the part of many companies that they do, in fact, recruit people with formal language training.

Seventeen percent of the compainies stated that they now have their own in-house language training facilities and another forty-six percent said they send their representatives to a commercial language school prior to an overseas assignment.

When firms operating abroad were asked which languages they needed most, those responding indicated the following priorities:

1) Spanish 2) French 3) German 4) Portuguese
5) Italian 6) Japanese 7) Arabic 8) Russian
9) Chinese 10) Indonesian

It is not surprising that these are the languages most in demand since the greatest volume of United States business is still with Europe, Latin America and Canada. Of special interest is the fact that in order to operate effectively in all countries it is becoming increasingly important to deal in the vernacular of the host nationals. This is especially true in Latin America, France, and Spain, but it is also a matter of concern for those dealing with countries behind the iron curtain as well as the Mideast, China, and Indonesia. As evidence of this desire to use their national language in business, we need only

*During 1974-75, Olympus Research Corporation (ORC) engaged in a study entitled "Languages for the World of Work". All the information in this article is taken from the full report prepared by Project Director, Ernest J. Wilkins, in collaboration with Project Associates, Mario Aranda, Linda Gene Walser and Rex Arnett. Toby Tamarkin, a consultant on the project helped gather data and collaborated on the curriculum development component of the study. The full report is available from Olympus Research Corporation, 1670 E. Thirteenth South, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84105.

cite the law recently passed in France (December, 1975) prohibiting the use of any English term by the media in advertising, business, and broadcasting when there is a French equivalent available.

The Fortune 500 corporations were asked to indicate which fields of study would combine with a foreign language to improve liklihood of employment. Their responses yielded the information on the following table.

FORTUNE 500 RATINGS OF COLLEGE MAJORS BEST COMBINED WITH LANGUAGE SKILLS*

Category	*Number*	*Percent*
Business adm./mgt.	104	72.22%
Marketing/sales	94	65.28
Engineering	81	56.25
Finance	57	39.58
Accounting	53	36.81
Secretarial skills	53	36.81
International relations	41	28.47
Economics	31	21.53
Clerical skills	22	15.28
Data processing	21	14.58
Law	19	13.19
Advertising	16	11.11
Communications	12	8.33
Library skills	12	8.33
Civil eng.	11	7.64
Statistics	11	7.64
Journalism	10	6.94
Public relations	10	6.94
Eng. lang. skills	9	6.25
Others	8	5.56
Psychology	8	5.56
Area studies	5	3.47
Sociology	5	3.47
Cultural studies	4	2.78
Political science	4	2.78
Fine arts	3	2.08
Public admin.	3	2.08

*Companies responding to one or more items: 144; Kendall's coefficient of concordance between above rankings and export management companies: 0.8422

An excellent list of corporations that have career opportunities for people with career training plus a language skill is the "Fortune 500". Each year Fortune magazine updates the information regarding total numbers of employees, assets, profits, etc. and publishes the list of the top 500 corporations. If one is looking for a job overseas, this is an invaluable source of information. In order to be classified among the top 500, a corporation would more than likely have international holdings and operations. In the Student

Workbook you will find a list of the Fortune 500 for 1976 as reported in the Fortune magazine for April, 1976.

Another source of information on companies doing business overseas, that is, outside of the United States is the Association of Export Management Companies (EMC). These companies handle foreign trade for firms that do not have their own international division. There are 669 Export Management Companies in the United States at the present time which belong to an association of EMC's. Their principal value is their ability to market products overseas. Their representatives must know languages and be experts in all aspects of foreign trade.

Positions in Government.

In addition to the opportunities abroad for *qualified* personnel in United States business firms, there are also many United States government jobs which require a foreign language as an adjunct skill. The government has a much more detailed inventory of its requirements in this respect than business. For years the Foreign Service Institute and the Defense Language Institute have provided language instruction for government and military personnel who need specialized career training plus language competency. Even so, there are still a considerable number of posts around the world in the more commonly taught languages where the language-designated positions are not now filled by personnel with the language qualifications required.

As in business, the government has need for many types of expertise. From economics to engineering and from medical work to legal services there is need for highly trained personnel who also possess language skills.

Allen Weinstein, a spokesman for the FSI claims that for the most part language majors from high schools and colleges as well fall short of the standards required for government service. Traditionally the language majors have sought employment on the basis of their language training alone without giving any thought to government needs in terms of other disciplines. In addition, Dr. Weinstein points out the necessity for a high degree of oral proficiency in a language in order to qualify for government work.

According to a recent publication of the United States government, entitled "Employment Abroad, Facts and Fallacies," the opportunity today for young Americans to study or travel or work overseas is great and becoming greater. Reading this entire pamphlet, one gets the impression that landing a job overseas is not easy, but with perserverance, hard work, and good qualifications, it is possible.

"An elementary or better knowledge of one or more foreign

languages is always an asset. One who expects to work abroad should seek to become proficient in the language of the country in which he expects to be stationed.

There is said to be a great discrepancy between the supply of and the demand for qualified persons to give overseas service, work with foreign nationals, participate in international conferences, and carry out other assigments in which the lack of foreign language proficiency is a serious handicap."

Commenting on the need for cross-cultural skills, the Chamber of Commerce publication asks, "Will the employee fit into the cultural, linguistic, and economic climate and will he prove adaptable enough to stick it out?" *Language proficiency* is recognized by the government as a prime requisite in assessing the ability of a person to adapt to overseas living. In addition, they see the need for a formal training in cross-cultural communications.

In government agencies such as the Agency for International Development (AID) and in the State Department, a list of language-essential positions is periodically prepared. In addition, there are other agencies and departments such as the Departments of Justice and Commerce which regularly hire a certain number of people whose jobs require a knowledge of a foreign language. On the following table you will find the approximate numbers of people hired by the United States government for language-designated positions and other language-essential jobs.

SUMMARY OF LANGUAGE DESIGNATED OR LANGUAGE ESSENTIAL POSITIONS BY SUB-DIVISION OF THE U. S. GOVERNMENT (1974 APPROXIMATE FIGURES)

Peace Corps	7,000
United States Information Agency	8,800
National Parks	2,100
Department of Justice	1,600
Foreign Service	1,100[1]
Department of Commerce	1,000
Agency for International Development	855
Journal of Publications	650
Library of Congress	635
Customs Service	613
United Nations	477[2]
Department of Agriculture	125
Inter-American Agency	72
Patent Office	50
Census Bureau	25
Other	150
TOTAL	25,252[3]

[1]not duplicated in other departments such as USIA, AID, etc.

[2]U.S. government employees assigned to U.N. mission.

[3]missing from this total are the following significant agencies:
CIA (information is classified)
FBI (information is classified)
Department of Defense (comprehensive figures for military and civilian positions were unavailable)

An indication of which languages are most important to the military and the government agencies is given by the forecast of the number of people to be trained in languages at the Defense Language Institute in 1976. This is a significant indication of our national interest and involvement.

DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE
Forecast–1976

Russian	1158
German	580
Spanish	467
Korean	354
Arabic	281
Mandarin	266
Vietnamese	197
French	182
Polish	182
Czech	121
Thai	120
Italian	74
Hebrew	42
Hungarian	36
TOTAL	4,135

Domestic Jobs which Require Foreign Language

A 1975 survey of newspaper advertisements requesting language skills reveals that the need is spread across a wide range of job titles. The survey included the following: *The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Seattle Times, The Chicago Tribune, The Denver Post, The San Francisco Examiner Chronicle,* and *The Los Angeles Times.* The Sunday edition of these newspapers was surveyed for a period of 15 weeks from March 23 through June 29, 1975. Many of the job openings were for positions within the United States. A summary of the findings follows:

NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS
FOR POSITIONS WHICH REQUIRE A LANGUAGE

Major Category	*No. of openings*	*Travel or For. Residence*	*Spanish*	*French*	*German*	*Other*
Management/adm.	65	27	42	13	3	21
Prof. services*	43	17	22	5	2	17
Educ./Soc. serv.	41	0	27	6	1	15
Superv./sales	47	8	29	4	0	14
Clerical/sec.	107	8	68	11	7	28
Skilled/semi sk.	69	1	52	9	3	21

*Professional services includes physician, engineer, dentist, etc.

During the fifteen week period of the survey, a total of 372 job opportunities were identified which required foreign language skill in addition to career training. Note that according to the chart, there were more openings in the clerical/secretarial category than any other.

Many opportunities require travel or foreign residence and the majority of requests were for Spanish. It is significant, however, that a rather large number of requests were for French and German, especially as managers and in bilingual education (included in the category marked "other").

Of great interest was the list of actual job titles. Conspicuous is the wide variety of jobs which require languages and the exciting work opportunities available to those who have career training plus a language.

A partial list follows:

European Housing Superintendent
Food Packaging Prod. (Superv.)
Int'l. Operations (Bank)
Engineer – Structural
Mechanical
Sanitary
Traffic
Sales Mgf. -- For. Marketing
Field Engineer Mgr.
Division V.P. – Multinational Corp.
Chemical Engineer
Overseas School Admin.
Job Developer (Jewish Welf. Agcy)
Market Planning Mgr.
Dir. Int'l Educ. Services
Bilingual Exec. Secretary
U.S. Embassy Admin. Asst.
Assoc. Dir. Health Admin.
Civil Eng. (Peace Corps)
Int'l Personnel Mgr.
Editor – translator
School Psychologist
Asst. Dir. Case workers
General Mgr. Int'l Corp.
Int'l Money Manager
Internist
Accountant
Registered Nurse
Int'l Sales Person
Group Comptroller
Social Worker
Respiratory Therapist
Music Librarian
Psychologist
Int'l Finance Dir.
Imports Mgr.

Project Dir. (Health)	Asst. Refer. Librarian
Architect – Commercial	Marketing Team Asst.
Residential	Senior Auditor (Chemical)
Industrial	Int'l. Secretary
Institutional	X-Ray Technician
Exec. Dir. (Health Serv.)	Quality Assurance Spec.

For skilled and semi-skilled workers there are job opportunities in such positions as: auto salesman, furniture salesman, cook, plumber, medical typist, receptionist, retail sales, legal secretary, teenage counselor, housing superintendent, construction worker, etc. For these positions the native American is in competition with the native speakers of Spanish, Japanese or Portuguese as the case may require. Of course the native American with language ability would certainly have an advantage over native Americans whose qualifications were otherwise comparable. These semi-skilled opportunities are much more prominently advertised on the West Coast, especially around Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco where there are large concentrations of speakers of other languages.

In places such as Miami, Florida, where an estimated 50% of the population speaks Spanish, a native American applying for a job which requires meeting the public is at a distinct disadvantage if he/she does not speak that language as well as English.

Some native Americans as well as new immigrants whose home language is other than English need to learn English as a second language to be able to perform their work in the United States. Of great urgency currently is the need for United States citizens to communicate with native Americans whose English is not sufficient to give them equal educational opportunities. The national effort to teach children in the language they understand best is a very substantial undertaking and a great many more bilingual education teachers need to be trained. Again, this is a major career which requires language as an adjunct skill. The main requirement is for competent educators who can train young people in their home language.

Also high on the priority list is the need for personnel trained in law enforcement, health and hospital services, social work, and an array of other public services which demand career training plus a foreign language.

From the evidence presented, we feel confident in stating to today's language student that there is definitely a need for languages in the world of work. The point has been clearly made that opportunities for language students in government and business are open only to those who have career training in one field plus a high degree of language proficiency as a secondary or adjunct skill. In the non-academic career fields, the ability to read and analyze a literary

passage is not considered as important as the ability to use the language in conversational situations related to one's daily work.